

March 12, 2008

TO: Subtidal Habitat Goals Project Committee members and interested parties

From: The Administrative Core Group of Subtidal Habitat Goals Project

Subject: Schedule Change: San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Project

Background

Over the past year, with help from all of the members of our three Committees—Science, Restoration and Resource Managers-- the partner agencies involved in leading the San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Project (Goals Project) have worked hard to continue to make progress on this ambitious and complex project. The Administrative Core Group (ACG) has developed detailed technical documents characterizing the subtidal habitats of the Bay; developed guidelines for development of science, restoration and management goals; hired and overseen outside technical consultants; convened and facilitated meetings of each of the three committees for your advice and input; and held a public meeting primarily focused on the regulated community.

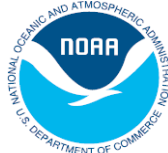
However, the project has faced challenges that have hampered our ability to keep to the original timeline for completion of the Goals Project by the end of 2008. The most significant challenge has been a lack of staff resources. The total staff available for this project has been less than 2 full time employees (FTEs). In addition, events such as the Cosco Busan oil spill as well as staffing and schedule changes have affected most of our ACG members and has added to the current, short term reduction of ACG staff availability for the Project.

In addition, as work on the Goals Project has progressed, and in response to your feedback as Committee members, it has been necessary to revise the work plan and products regarding information and interim work products that you have said that you need in order to provide quality input into the development of the subtidal restoration, science or protection goals. For example, it was necessary to allocate additional funding to a contractor to research and provide the Resource Manager Committee members with a better understanding of the effect of particular stressors on subtidal habitats. Similarly, as the Restoration Committee has progressed, the need has emerged to form smaller “subcommittees” to address restoration opportunities and constraints for specific habitat types. The development and management of those subcommittees has required additional time and resources.

Schedule change and additional resource allocation

In response to the challenges outlined above, the ACG has analyzed the existing schedule and available resources and proposes to make several changes:

- First, the ACG has identified several sources of potential additional funding for the Project from NOAA and the Ocean Protection Council



(through the Coastal Conservancy). With the additional funding, the ACG is considering hiring a full time project administrator as well as a part time science advisor.

- In addition, the ACG will be making some changes internally to the short term project process by reducing the number of committee meetings through mid-year to allow for the ACG to focus on content development. *Therefore, the Science, Restoration and Resource Manager Committees will be suspended until sometime this summer.*
- Finally, the ACG proposes an extension of the project timeline of about 8-9 months. Under this revised schedule, initial goals development would be completed by December 2008, a draft final report would be available by March of 2009, completion of reviews and public input by fall 2009, and publication of the final report by December 2009.

The ACG feels confident that the implementation of above proposed changes will result in a more robust, comprehensive and scientifically sound project. We are excited about the future of the Subtidal Goals Project and look forward to continuing to work with all of you to see the project to its timely completion.

We would like to thank each of you for your dedication to the Project to date, and look forward to continuing to work with you when we re-convene the Committees later this year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of us. Thank you.

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